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ABSTRACT

Intended for use by any community member who is concerned about the problems of child abuse and neglect, this manual describes some of the essential activities involved in planning, organizing, and operating a community-wide child protection coordinating committee (CCPCC). The manual includes activities for identifying potential participants, developing a commitment to coordinated action, identifying central issues to be addressed by a coordinating committee, and clarifying the roles and responsibilities of committee members. The manual also identifies procedures which help to avoid problems in the organization process. The first chapter of the manual provides a rationale and specifies ways various professionals, including educators, can be involved. The second and third chapters describe initial steps in getting a CCPCC started and subsequent steps to be taken in establishing the CCPCC in the community. The fourth chapter shows how to conduct initial meetings of the coordinating committee, while the fifth chapter describes external and internal functions of the committee. Appendices provide lists of regional child abuse and neglect resource centers and give standards applicable to community response to child abuse and neglect. (RH)

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A COMMUNITY APPROACH:

THE CHILD PROTECTION COORDINATING COMMITTEE

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THE USER MANUAL SERIES

This manual was developed and written by James L. Jenkins, Robert A. MacDicken and Nancy J. Ormsby. It was edited and produced by Kirschner Associates, Inc., Washington, D.C. under Contract No. HEW-105-77-1050.

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PREFACE

Recently, there has been a great deal of attention directed toward the problem of child abuse and neglect in the United States. Social service agencies have been aware of the problem of child maltreatment for a number of years. Now medical personnel, educators, law enforcement officers and portions of the general population are becoming aware of child maltreatment and its effects on the child and the family.

Professionals have also become aware of their responsibilities under law to report to a child protective services agency or to a law enforcement agency if they suspect that child abuse or neglect is occurring. However, many believe that once they have reported they have fulfilled their responsibility; they prefer to leave the process of finding solutions to these problems in the hands of child protective services, law enforcement agencies, or the courts.

Child maltreatment is not only a family problem; nor is it only the problem of those agencies and organizations directly involved in responding to reports of suspected child maltreatment. As with any social problem, child maltreatment is a problem of the total community. This community responsibility includes a legal, moral and ethical responsibility for the community as a whole to assume an active role in response to child abuse and neglect.

This manual is intended to be used by anyone in the community who may be concerned about the problem of child maltreatment. Although child protective services (CPS) workers or supervisors may find this manual useful, many other persons may be in a position to serve as a catalyst in developing a coordinated community response.

This manual describes some of the essential activities involved in planning, organizing and operating a community-wide child protection coordinating committee. It includes activities related to identifying potential participants, developing a commitment to coordinated action, identifying central issues to be addressed by a coordinating committee and clarifying the roles and responsibilities of committee members. It will also identify procedures which can be utilized to avoid problems arising in the organization process.

I

RATIONALE FOR A COMMUNITY CHILD PROTECTION COORDINATING COMMITTEE

WHY A COMMUNITY RESPONSE IS NECESSARY

While it is true that the child protective services (CPS) agency has primary responsibility for receiving and investigating reports of child maltreatment, no single individual, agency, or professional discipline has the necessary knowledge, skills or resources to provide all of the services needed by families where abuse or neglect occurs. Only through the development of a comprehensive, community-wide approach to the total problem of child maltreatment can any community expect to resolve these problems.

Child abuse and neglect is a complex problem. Child maltreatment is rooted in a number of factors, including the background and current relationships among family members and the internal and external stresses on the family. There is no single reason why families experience child maltreatment. Thus, management of child abuse and neglect must be done on an individual case basis. Effective service delivery must involve the combined skills of various disciplines.

In addition, a community-wide effort is necessary for determining the extent to which the full range of prevention, identification, assessment and treatment services are available. Without this community response, gaps in services may exist and the community may have no mechanism for attempting to fill these gaps. A coordinated community is better able to initiate essential services that do not currently exist and to minimize duplication of services. For example, if one agency responds to problems of runaway youth, another to teenage victims of rape and incest, and still others to problems of emergency child care or incidents of family violence, the result may be overlaps in services, duplication of effort, and, most important, failure to respond to the basic underlying problems of the family.

Any community organizational structure requires a climate of understanding if it is to be successful. Professionals providing direct services to abusive or neglectful families need the support of the community at large. The public must provide the concern and the impetus for action which will reinforce a community-wide attempt to stop child maltreatment.

WHY A FORMAL COORDINATING BODY

Child abuse and neglect practitioners generally agree that a multidisciplinary approach to child maltreatment has the greatest potential for success. However, some practitioners feel overwhelmed with the work they already have and do not want to contribute the additional effort required to coordinate with other service providers in the community. Others believe that informal coordination, for example on an ad hoc, case-by-case basis, is sufficient to meet community needs.

There are a number of problems which arise in communities where no formal coordination exists. Issues regarding roles and responsibilities in working with families frequently become "turfism" disputes, and the resultant interagency conflicts often cause slow or incomplete service delivery when referral communications break down. In some instances, for example, CPS workers or supervisors themselves may claim that they are doing everything that needs to be done and do not need to get anyone else involved.

When agencies have no official basis for working together, organizations and individuals who might otherwise provide support or seek assistance are unable to work their way through the "maze" of agency names and designations. Agency personnel who might be inclined to seek help from other agencies have no established channels to facilitate this.

Agencies may be duplicating each others' services or may not be using the most effective methods of service delivery. At the same time, there may be gaps in service.

Children may not have any strong advocates for their legal and human rights and well-being. Many children are denied the most fundamental constitutional rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

The general public is often unaware of the extent of child maltreatment, as well as of their potential to help the families involved.

Most of these problems could be alleviated through the establishment of a community child protection coordinating committee. The draft *Federal Standards for Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention and Treatment Programs and Projects* (hereafter referred to as the Federal Standards) urge that a community child protection coordinating committee be initiated "to foster cooperative, community-wide child protection efforts." This committee can be called, alternatively, a task force, a council, or a concerned organization; but whatever the name, the purpose is basically the same. The committee provides

an organizational structure in which community agencies, organizations, and concerned individuals can work together to overcome the problems of child maltreatment in the community.

SPECIFIC FUNCTIONS OF A COMMUNITY COORDINATING COMMITTEE

The coordinating committee will be the primary vehicle in the community for coordinating all child abuse and neglect prevention and treatment efforts. In order to fulfill this overall objective, the committee must fulfill the following functions:

- Encouraging policies on the part of community agencies which demonstrate a capacity and willingness to work together
- Surveying and analyzing needs and resources
- Determining community awareness of needs and resources
- Making program recommendations
- Developing new community resources as needed
- Reviewing service delivery
- Establishing and/or facilitating multidisciplinary child abuse and neglect case consultation teams
- Serving as advocates for children and families.

More detailed information on these functions and on methods by which the committee carries them out is included in later sections.

WHO IS REPRESENTED ON THE COMMITTEE

By definition, any community coordinating committee should have broad representation. The types of agencies, organizations and individuals which might be included will vary widely, depending on the community. In organizing the committee, however, CPS (or anyone else involved) should plan to include all of the groups in the community directly involved in service delivery plus as many others as could be reasonably expected to make a substantial contribution (of staff, facilities, and/or other resources) to the overall effort.

If this number of groups or organizations is substantial, much of the work of the committee will be done by subcommittees; it is more important to include people, at this point, than to exclude people because of a concern about committee size.

A comprehensive list of all of the individuals or groups who might be included in a committee would be impossibly long. Among the agencies or organizations which might be considered would be:

- The Department of Social Services (Human Resources, Public Welfare, etc.) including:
  - Child Protective Services (CPS)
  - Foster Care
  - Institutional or Residential Care
  - AFDC, WIN or other family support programs
  - Day Care
  - Homemaker Care
- Law enforcement officials, including:
  - Juvenile officials
  - Representatives of local police or sheriff's departments
- Court-related personnel, including:
  - Juvenile and family court judges
  - Prosecutor or State's Attorney
  - Probation and parole officials
- Medical personnel, including:
  - Medical examiner or coroner
  - Hospital supervisory personnel
  - Public Health officials
  - Local medical society
  - Pediatrician and/or pediatric nurse
  - Visiting nurses
  - Other nurses
- Mental health professionals, including:
  - Community Mental Health
  - Psychiatrist and/or psychologist
  - Psychiatric social workers

- Local political bodies such as:

  - Board of County Commissioners
  - City Council
  - School Board members

- Agencies providing services to children, including:

  - Local public school officials
  - Local day care service providers
  - Head Start and/or other early childhood development agencies
  - Recreational program providers (e.g., YMCA, YWCA, Boys' Clubs, Girl Scouts, etc.)
  - Parent-Teacher Association

- Private agencies or organizations, including:

  - Private family services agencies
  - Self-help organizations (e.g., Parents Anonymous)
  - Local clergy groups
  - Child advocacy organizations
  - Civic organizations.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The primary function of the committee is the overall coordination of community efforts in the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect. Within the committee, members will assume various roles and responsibilities ranging from chairing committee meetings to serving on various subcommittees and task forces in performing the work of the committee. As suggested in Chapter IV, each committee will establish its own procedures for determining the nature, duration and selection process associated with these responsibilities.

In order to fulfill its coordinating function effectively, however, it is essential for each member to have a clear understanding of the specific roles and responsibilities each agency and organization has in the community's protective services delivery system. No one group or agency can perform all of the activities required in responding to the problem of child maltreatment; rather, each professional group and organization must assume responsibility for specific elements of the total system.

Exhibit I, following this page, outlines one structure for identifying the roles and responsibilities of various member groups. Within individual communities, delegation of responsibilities may vary according to the needs and capabilities of the community, but this basic framework will be essentially the same. The critical point is that specific responsibility must be delegated, the assignment of all functions must be clear to every agency represented on the committee, and the roles of all the members must mesh to form a complete child protection system.

The following sections will discuss briefly some of the major roles and responsibilities for each relevant group. These functions are related to responsibilities discussed in the Draft *Federal Standards for Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention and Treatment Programs and Projects*, key elements of which appear in the Appendix of this manual.

The Local CPS Agency

The CPS agency is the key organization in the community child protective system. Among functions for which the CPS agency will assume initiating and lead responsibility in the community are:

- Receipt of reports of suspected abuse and neglect on a 24-hour per day, seven days per week basis*
- Conduct of the initial investigation and assessment of risk, immediately in emergency situations, and generally within 48 hours of the receipt of the report*
- Development of an individualized case intervention and treatment plan for each family or family member in cases where abuse or neglect is substantiated
- Conduct of case management functions, including case records and reports of progress against the case plan
- Provision of direct treatment services to the children, parents and the family unit
- Development and enhancement of community prevention and treatment resources

*In some jurisdictions, law enforcement officers will assume leadership in these functions, generally supported by CPS.

EXHIBIT I

FUNCTIONS OF PROFESSIONAL GROUPS IN RELATION TO CHILD MALTREATMENT SITUATIONS

	IDENTIFI-CATION & REPORTING	INTAKE & INVESTI-GATION	CASE PLANNING	CASE MANAGEMENT	TREATMENT	COURT ACTION	SECONDARY PREVENTION & SELF-HELP	PRIMARY PREVENTION	RESOURCE ENHANCEMENT EVALUATION & TRAINING
LOCAL CPS AGENCY		LEAD*	LEAD	LEAD	LEAD	PROVIDE	PROVIDE	PROVIDE	LEAD
PHYSICAL HEALTH SYSTEM	LEAD		PROVIDE	ADVISE	LEAD	ADVISE	LEAD	LEAD	LEAD
MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM	LEAD		PROVIDE	ADVISE	LEAD	ADVISE	LEAD	LEAD	LEAD
EDUCATION SYSTEM	LEAD		PROVIDE	ADVISE	LEAD	ADVISE	LEAD	LEAD	LEAD
JUDICIARY SYSTEM	LEAD		PROVIDE	ADVISE	ADVISE	LEAD	ADVISE	PROVIDE	LEAD
LAW ENFORCEMENT SYSTEM	LEAD	PROVIDE*	PROVIDE	ADVISE	ADVISE	PROVIDE	PROVIDE	PROVIDE	LEAD
RESIDENTIAL CARE SYSTEM	LEAD		PROVIDE	ADVISE	LEAD	ADVISE		PROVIDE	LEAD
SELF-HELP GROUPS	LEAD		ADVISE		LEAD		LEAD	PROVIDE	PROVIDE

DEFINITIONS: LEAD = Responsible for intitiaing action and/or coordinating activities, including providing and advising functions
PROVIDE = Responsible for participeting in actions related to this function, including advising functions
ADVISE = Responsible for providing input regarding actions or activities under this function

* In some jurisdictions, law enforcement will have a lead role, with the CPS agency providing assistance in investigation, particularly in terms of physical abuse.

- Completion of case worker evaluations and conduct of intra-agency training for child protective personnel.

In addition, there are at least three functional areas in which CPS will provide services to families and in the community, often in relationship to the leadership of other agencies or organizations.

These are:

- Initiating or supporting court action on cases, as needed

- Providing secondary prevention services (see Chapter V) and lending support to self-help programs

- Participating in primary prevention programs designed to improve the social environment and to enhance the quality of parenting functions in relation to all adults who serve as caretakers of children.

The Physical Health System

Physicians, nurses and other medical personnel play a major role in the child protection system in every community. Functions for which the physical health system will assume initiating, independent, and/or leadership roles include:

- Identification of cases of suspected child maltreatment and reporting to the CPS agency or the law enforcement system, as required

- Provision of direct treatment services to children, parents and the family unit

- Development and conduct of secondary prevention programs for families "at risk" (see Chapter V)

- Development and conduct of primary prevention programs (see Chapter V)

- Development and conduct of training programs in the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect for medical personnel

- Evaluation of the performance of medical personnel and enhancement of local resources.

In addition to these functions, physical health systems should provide support to CPS in development of individual case plans for abusing and neglecting families, should provide periodic advice to CPS in relation to case management, and should serve as expert witnesses or provide other means of advice or support in relation to any necessary court action.

The Mental Health System

The provision of effective mental health services is a prerequisite for any community system designed to prevent and treat child abuse and neglect. Psychiatrists, psychologists, clinical social workers and other mental health workers should assume initiating or leadership roles in the same functional areas as is the case for the physical health system. These include:

- Identification and reporting
- Treatment
- Secondary prevention and self-help
- Primary prevention
- Resource enhancement, evaluation and training (particularly training of mental health workers).

The mental health system is also responsible for providing case planning efforts in conjunction with CPS, for advising CPS in case management, and for supporting the judiciary system and CPS in cases of necessary court action.

The Education System

Principals, teachers, and other school-related personnel are among many professional groups which often see their responsibilities in cases of child abuse and neglect as being limited to identification and reporting. While this function is one area in which the education system must assume an independent or initiating role, it is only one of the roles which educators should play in the child protection system. Other areas which require initiating or leadership action from educators include:

- Treatment, particularly treatment of children
- Secondary prevention and self-help
- Primary prevention
- Resource enhancement, evaluation and training (especially training of educational personnel).

The leadership role of educators in primary prevention cannot be overemphasized, since much of this activity is related to education.

In addition, educators should assume a role in providing assistance to CPS in case planning, in advising CPS on issues related to case management, and in cooperating with the court, law enforcement officers and CPS in relation to necessary court actions.

The Judiciary System

Court-related personnel generally accept responsibility for assuming an initiating or leadership role in relation to court actions in cases of child maltreatment. This function is critical and primary, of course, but the judiciary system can be a major asset to the entire child protection system to the extent that it also accepts responsibility for other functions. Among the other areas in which initiating or leadership actions on the part of the judiciary system are important are:

- Identification and reporting (situations of suspected abuse may come to the attention of court-related personnel in relation to non-child maltreatment cases, for example)
- Resource enhancement, evaluation and training (courts can support child protection systems through such actions as training of court-related personnel, providing an objective assessment of the performance of various professionals, or even through the court-ordered establishment of certain types of essential services).

The judiciary system possesses significant knowledge and experience which can be invaluable if applied to supporting other agencies or organizations in other functional areas. Case planning with CPS

and primary prevention within the multidisciplinary setting are two such functions. Court-related personnel can also provide valuable advice in case management, treatment and secondary prevention.

The Law Enforcement System

As mentioned earlier, in some jurisdictions law enforcement officers serve an initiating or leadership role in receiving reports, conducting investigations and determining risk. In most of these areas, these efforts are supported by CPS. In jurisdictions where CPS has the lead role for intake and investigation, law enforcement support for CPS is important.

Law enforcement officials also must assume a leadership role in resource enhancement, evaluation and training, particularly in relation to the law enforcement system itself.

Other functions of the law enforcement system in the total child protection effort should include:

- Initiating or lead responsibility for identification and reporting of suspected child maltreatment
- Provision of case planning input in relation to CPS
- Initiation or support of actions related to necessary court intervention
- Provision of secondary and primary prevention services (see Chapter V)
- Providing input and advice as needed in relation to the work of other agencies in case management and treatment.

The Residential Child Care System

A primary responsibility of residential child care staff, of course, is the provision of treatment for abused and neglected children. Because child maltreatment is a family problem and a community problem, however, the residential child care system must assume responsibility for other functions as well.

In addition to treatment of children, there are two other functions for which the residential care system should initiate action. These are:

- Identification and reporting of suspected child maltreatment (essential if the total needs of the family are to be met)
- Resource enhancement, evaluation and training (especially training of residential case workers).

The residential child care system should also fulfill several other functions as part of the total community child protection system. These responsibilities include:

- Provide case planning expertise related to abused and neglected children and their families, in cooperation with CPS
- Implement and support primary prevention programs
- Serve as advisors to CPS in case management and monitoring
- Serve as expert witnesses and otherwise assist as required in court actions.

Self-Help Groups

Self-help groups provide an important dimension of the total child protection system by virtue of their knowledge and understanding of the family's point of view. Functions for which self-help groups should serve an initiating or leadership role in the community include:

- Identification and reporting
- Secondary prevention programs for families "at risk"
- Treatment and support, particulary in terms of parents and teenage children who may be group members.

Other areas of responsibility in which self-help groups can make a significant contribution to community efforts include:

- Providing primary prevention programs and supporting the overall prevention effort
- Providing resource enhancement (including advocacy), evaluation (from the "client" perspective) and training programs, particularly for community groups and volunteers
- Assisting CPS in case planning efforts to maximize benefits to the family.

As stated previously, individual committees should make adjustments in these roles and responsibilities depending on the needs and resources of the community. Each of the major roles and responsibilities will need further refinement and delineation to ensure maximum coordination and a comprehensive community child protection system. As roles and responsibilities are understood, the committee can increase its effectiveness as a group.

GEOGRAPHIC EXTENT OF THE COMMITTEE

The functions of and representation on the committee will, of course, be affected by the extent of the area where the committee has jurisdiction. The intent is to establish a "community" coordinating committee. But communities vary greatly in geographic size and population density.

In deciding what area the committee should cover, one possible alternative is to establish a committee for each county in the state. In more rural areas, where both population and resources may be low, it might be advisable to have one committee cover several counties. However, it is important to remember that too large a geographic area may limit the effectiveness of the council; people may not have much direct involvement due to lack of interest in what is happening in much of the geographic area covered and due to the distance they would be required to travel in order to participate.

In large metropolitan areas, committees may be established on the basis of political subdivisions such as wards, secondary school districts or combinations of these. This will depend on population density and availability and distribution of resources.

Regardless of the geographic area to be served by the committee, organizers must keep several key issues in mind, including: amount of community interest, political climate, local feelings about social programs, actual leaders, assumed leaders, and the existence of specific problem areas.

II

GETTING STARTED

The question most often raised at this point relates to how to start the work of forming a coordinating council. Frequently CPS workers and other concerned persons will say things such as:

- "We tried to call a meeting once, and nobody came."
- "We ask people to cooperate with us, but no one ever calls to offer to help."
- "People in our community think that CPS can do all of the child maltreatment work - that they don't need or want anyone else."
- "Child abuse and neglect is CPS's job. We don't want any outsiders involved in the process."

However, as the reported incidence of child abuse and neglect increases, and as the size of CPS case loads continues to rise, the increased need for coordination and cooperation within the community rises with them. At the same time, the groups which should be cooperating in this effort are so busy with their own work that they do not seem to have the time or the inclination to assist with a coordinating effort. These problems can and must be overcome if communities are to respond to the needs of families in stress.

PROCESSES FOR ORGANIZING

There is no single process for organizing a coordinating committee which will work in every community. In some instances, CPS agencies will possess sufficient knowledge, credibility and organizational experience to simply convene a general community meeting for purposes of initiating the organizational effort. In other areas, a small group of three or four interested and concerned professionals may need to work for several weeks or even months collecting background information and encouraging community awareness before a general meeting can be called. There are other communities in which the environment is such that a task force will be required which can address only a few problems or issues at first, thus demonstrating to the community the value of cooperative action. For example, by initiating a respite care service or a 24-hour volunteer "talk line," the

task force can provide a valuable service in the community and fill an identified service gap. If several organizations or agencies receive credit for this effort, the value of coordinated effort will be clear.

Even before the decision is made as to which approach will be taken, a basic community assessment must be completed. Questions to be answered include:

- What is the general level of need for services in the community?
- Who are the current and potential service providers?
- What community environment factors will impact the organization process?

Only after these questions have been answered can the organizational process proceed with any degree of assurance of success. Alternative methods for answering each of these questions are discussed briefly in the sections which follow, in terms of two issues:

- Who will take the lead role?
- Developing a plan of action.

WHO WILL TAKE THE LEAD ROLE

In most communities, the lead role in organizing a community committee will be assumed by CPS. As the agency primarily responsible for responding to the problem of child abuse and neglect, CPS is in the best position to know the needs of the community in terms of child maltreatment, to identify actual or potential gaps in services, and to provide the expertise needed to ensure the effective coordination of the effort. Should the question of the need for a community committee arise outside of CPS, concerned persons should first contact the local CPS unit, inquire as to what efforts are being made or planned, and seek ways to work with or through CPS in the organization effort.

Whether or not CPS is involved from the start (and there may be rare instances when this will not be possible), the decision to proceed can only be made after a careful assessment of community needs, resources and environment. This assessment should be made by a small core group of three or four professionals. Ideally, these should be drawn from two or three different agencies or organizations and should include two or three different professional disciplines.

Forming the Core Group

The only mandatory characteristics of the core group members are their concern for the coordination effort, their knowledge of child maltreatment, and their willingness to devote a great number of hard and thankless hours to the task.

The process of forming a core group is an informal one, and may happen in a number of ways. The core group may evolve from a CPS staff meeting in which one or two CPS supervisors or workers volunteer to begin working with one or two other knowledgeable people in the community. It may evolve out of a shared experience such as a training session or a critical community event. For example:

- One coordinating committee was formed as a result of the efforts of three social workers and a nurse who began working together when each was invited to participate in a regional child abuse and neglect prevention and treatment training seminar.

- In another community, the effort began as a result of a community tragedy involving a child, and the concern of a private citizen, a ministerial group, and a mental health program which emerged from that tragedy.

More often, the process begins when concerned workers begin talking to other service providers in the community. These informal conversations may take a long time, and may occur over several weeks or months before it is possible to identify the three or four key individuals who have the potential to begin the formative work.

Since the formation of a core group is critical to the process, it will be worth the time and effort required to ensure that those three or four persons involved have the knowledge and the perseverance to carry through. For the individual seeking to establish such a group, there are several key points to remember:

- Be persistent. There will be times when it seems as if you are the only one who cares about coordination, but stay with it until you find others.

- Take advantage of what you learn. As you begin talking to others, you will find even more instances where coordination would help families. Keep notes on these and use this knowledge whenever appropriate.

- Don't take "no" for an answer. Properly encouraged to see how coordination can help them do their own jobs better, opponents can be at least neutralized, and some may become your strongest allies at a later point.

- Be sensitive. Other service providers have their own points of view. True coordination means concern for everyone's job, and helping every other agency or group in the community to be more effective in fulfilling what they see as their primary purposes and goals.

Once three or four members of a core group have been identified and have agreed to work together, it is time for a strategy session.

Holding Strategy Sessions

The most common mistake made at this point is for those three or four individuals to decide to hold a general community meeting. Such a meeting this early in the process is almost destined to fail. The core group should hold several strategy sessions to share their knowledge about the problems of child maltreatment in the community, to identify the key groups or organizations involved in working with children and families in stress, and to begin analyzing the community. Once the core group is certain that they share a common knowledge base and have a common understanding of how they will proceed, the question of group identity and legitimacy can be addressed.

Conducting A Preliminary Community Assessment

The initial strategy sessions are a good time to begin a preliminary assessment of gaps in existing services. While a detailed analysis of community needs and resources is best completed by a full coordinating committee, the core group can build its organizing strategy based on shared perception of the service delivery system as it exists in the community. The two questions around which this discussion should revolve are:

- What resources are evident in the community and where do service gaps appear to exist?

- How do the service providers currently relate to each other?

These two questions can be answered simultaneously through the completion of a preliminary community analysis similar to Exhibit II, following this page. This analysis can be completed in the discussions of the core group or in consultation with various service providers. The list of possible committee members included in Chapter I may serve as a starting point for the analysis.

The core group should seek as much information as possible at this point regarding the mission, purpose, and goals of all of the key community agencies and groups related to children, youth and families. Spending time discerning the extent of resources, problems and constraints within which those agencies work is an important task in the early part of the organization process. The clearer picture the committee has of these community realities, the better will be the chances that the coordinating effort will succeed. If this sounds like a lot of "homework," it is; but it will pay off in later steps in the organization process.

The information gathered from this community analysis should be summarized in a general strategy document developed by the core group. This document can provide important background information for the development of objectives and priorities once the community coordinating committee is organized.

A valuable addendum to this analysis would be the assessment of the extent of community awareness which exists among service providers and among the public at large. This data can be collected formally (i.e., through questionnaires or "person on the street" interviews) or informally (i.e., through a review of recent newspaper articles, television programs, etc. and through informal conversations with a variety of people both in and out of service-providing agencies or organizations).

EXHIBIT II

PRELIMINARY COMMUNITY ANALYSIS

I. When a family is in crisis, which agency(s) do they call?

_____

_____

II. Who is responsible for Child Protective Services in your community?

Legally responsible _____

Other _____

III. Which agencies receive reports and referrals?

Department of Public Welfare _____
Juvenile Court _____
Police Department _____

Other (specify) _____

_____

Number of reports received per month

Families _____ Children _____

Number of referrals to/from other agencies per month

Families _____ Children _____

Number of children on whom neglect - dependent petitions are filed per month _____

Number of children placed in temporary shelter care per month _____

EXHIBIT II (con'd)

IV. What kinds of services are now available?

Service	Agency Providing
( ) Foster Family Care (long-term)	
( ) Emergency Foster Family Homes (24 hour)	
( ) Homemakers (Teaching)	
( ) Emergency Homemakers (24 hour)	
( ) Emergency Caretakers (24 hour)	
( ) Answering Service (after normal work hours)	
( ) Emergency Intake Service (24 hr., weekend, holidays)	
( ) Child Protective Service Intake (8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Mon.-Fri.)	
( ) Outreach and Follow-up	
( ) Emergency Shelter for Adolescents	
( ) Institutional Care	
( ) Group Homes	
( ) Treatment Facilities (Older Youth)	
( ) Counseling for Parent-Child Conflicts	
( ) Neighborhood Crisis Centers	
( ) Twenty-four Hour Walk-in Day Care	
( ) Other (specify) _____	
_____	

EXHIBIT II (con'd)

V. Are available services for children in crisis coordinated in your community? Describe:

_____

_____

Are there agreements between agencies? written ( ) or verbal ( ) List, such as:

Dept. of Social Services - Juvenile Court _____
Dept. of Social Services - Police Department _____
Dept. of Social Services - Other child caring agencies _____

_____

_____

_____

How do the agencies relate, both positive and negative? Describe:

_____

_____

Are there formalized (written) referral procedures? List:

_____

_____

Are there regular meetings for review of agreements, procedures, and problems?

_____

_____

Are there specific individuals within the agencies designated to receive and process referrals? List agencies and describe procedure briefly:

_____

_____

VI. What gaps in services are there in your community for providing emergency services? List.

_____

_____

_____

Could some services now being provided be shifted to include additional services for a more complete system? THINK: then describe what shifts or changes might be possible and estimate additional cost, if any.

_____

_____

_____

_____

If additional monies would be needed, from where would they most logically need to come?

State _____
Local (Gov.) _____
Private _____
Other _____

List individuals and/or groups, both political and nonpolitical, who would need to be contacted to begin discussion. What would this need to include?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

DEVELOPING A PRELIMINARY PLAN OF ACTION

The community analysis document will provide the core group with the basic information needed to develop a strategy for organizing the coordinating committee. Alternative courses of action possible at this point include:

- developing small coordinated efforts to address singular needs or service gaps
- creating a general community awareness of the need for coordination
- convening a general community meeting under the leadership of CPS.

The specific action chosen will depend on the results of the community analysis.

Developing Small Coordinated Efforts

In communities where a considerable amount of resistance to a coordinating committee is encountered, this is probably the best initial strategy. The basic approach is to demonstrate the effectiveness of cooperative action by initiating some service or program (e.g., a crisis nursery) for the community which is needed and which does not currently exist.

Creating Community Awareness

In communities where coordination is lacking primarily because people are unaware of the benefits of cooperative action, it will be necessary to create such an awareness. Unlike public awareness campaigns designed to encourage reporting, this strategy focuses on helping service providers to see how virtually every organization or agency could do an even better job of helping children and families in stress through coordination and cooperation.

Holding A Community Meeting

This strategy will be necessary in every community. It can only work, however, when the organizations and agencies serving children and families are aware of the benefits of coordinated action and are generally willing to cooperate. If the preliminary analysis shows that this readiness exists, plans for a meeting can proceed. If this readiness does not exist, other sources of action will be needed first.

Once a plan of action has been determined by the core group, the organizing process begins. Specific suggestions regarding how to implement the three strategies are included in the next chapter.

III

NEXT STEPS

Up to this point in the process, the work of organizing and promoting cooperative relationships will have been limited to the internal tasks performed by the core group. The next phase of the process involves gaining the support of service providers and the community for the formation of a coordinating committee.

There are three steps to this phase:

- demonstrating the effectiveness of coordinated action
- fostering community awareness and support
- gaining cooperation and participation from agencies and organizations.

In some communities it may be possible to skip either or both of the first two, depending on the community analysis discussed in Chapter II. Although the steps are similar, and often can be carried out simultaneously, there are some unique characteristics of each one. For this reason, the steps are discussed separately in this chapter.

Throughout the entire process, however, there are two critical factors which must underlie every action taken:

- the coordination effort must *enhance*, not compete with, the efforts of direct service providers
- the focus must always be directed on the positive benefits of coordination, not on the negative effects of noncoordination.

DEMONSTRATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF COORDINATED EFFORT

The purpose of this step is to enable service providers to experience the benefits of coordination through the actual obtaining of a needed service. If service providers in the community already acknowledge these benefits and understand how coordination can enhance their effectiveness, this step can be skipped. Where

resistance to coordination exists, however, some of this resistance can be overcome if a community resource can be developed in cooperation with CPS and one or two other key agencies.

The actual process for implementing this step will vary by community and by the type of service developed. Examples of services or programs which might be planned would include a crisis nursery, a Parents Anonymous chapter, a 24-hour volunteer crisis "talk line," or respite care service.

The basic elements of the process of implementation will include:

- Identification of current gaps in the service delivery system of the community

  This element involves analysis and brainstorming, and every possible program, strategy or service element which might be useful should be identified.

- Selection of one service or program to be developed

  What is important here is to choose a program or service which can be obtained. Since a defeat of this effort may be a serious setback to the organizing effort, probable success is more important than priority need. The core group should select a strategy which is likely to succeed, not one which has major barriers to success.

- Development of a plan for implementation

  The process should not begin until each step has been carefully planned, realistic time schedules established and persons responsible for each step identified and prepared to proceed. Often it will be useful to consult with someone in another community who has actually succeeded in obtaining the targeted service; the NCCAN Regional Resource Centers listed in the appendix of this manual can often identify such persons.

- Obtaining support from key agencies

  The two or three agencies or organizations most likely to benefit from the planned service should be contacted and the plan explained. Support from CPS and one or two other groups is critical if the program is to succeed.

- Monitoring progress

  At each major step in the process, the core group should determine whether or not the plan is proceeding on schedule, devise means for overcoming any unanticipated problems, and adjust the plan as needed.

Once the actual operation of the program or service is ensured, the organization effort can "go public," moving to create awareness of and support for the concept of a community coordinating committee.

FOSTERING COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND SUPPORT

The primary purpose of these activities is to gain community support and acceptance for the organization of a coordinating committee. As with the preceding step, this step can be shortened or eliminated if the community assessment has shown that the committee concept already has the necessary support and acceptance.

In communities where there is a lack of awareness regarding how the problem of child maltreatment affects that particular local situation, this awareness must also be fostered in order to ensure public acceptance of the community coordinating committee.

The basic procedures on *How to Plan and Carry Out a Successful Public Awareness Program on Child Abuse and Neglect* are clearly discussed in the publication by the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect which has that title - DHEW Publication No. (OHD) 76-30089. Persons needing basic information on public awareness campaigns should obtain a copy either through NCCAN directly or through the NCCAN Regional Resource Center which serves that area (see Appendix).

Before launching the community awareness effort, it is important to identify any other public awareness efforts which are related to the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect and which already exist in the community. If the CPS agency, either at the state or local level, is involved in a campaign to increase reporting, for example, the core group must seek to establish relationships with persons involved in that effort and to coordinate with them.

There are two basic goals for the public awareness activities as they relate to the coordinating committee. These are:

- to create a positive, visible image of the coordinating committee (i.e., of the core planning group)

- to provide information to the public which demonstrates the need for greater multidisciplinary cooperation and community coordination.

The most basic tools for reaching these goals are public speaking and program presentation coupled with the effective use of the media.

Public Speaking and Program Presentation

Whether the public awareness effort is made in cooperation with an already-existing public awareness campaign, or launched as a new effort in the community by the committee, there are some general rules which persons who have successfully organized coordinating bodies in various communities suggest. Among these are:

- Do not be overly selective about the audiences. Almost anyone who is interested in hearing about child maltreatment can benefit from a knowledgeable presentation.

- To the maximum extent possible, be supportive in what you say about the efforts of all service providers in the community. Existing gaps in services can be discussed in terms such as "but we could do an even better job if . . ."

- Do not wait for groups or individuals to come to you. Attend regular meetings of service clubs, church groups, etc. Many of these organizations have difficulties in scheduling interesting programs and will respond positively if you volunteer to present a program for them at a later point.

- Focus the presentations on a limited number of ideas or factors. The full scope of the child maltreatment problem cannot and should not be addressed in one or two presentations.

Each program should be related to only one or two key topics, depending on the audience. For example, a presentation to a PTA group may focus on the dynamics of child maltreatment, how it relates to family stress, and the fact that it can occur in almost any type of family.

- Use written materials and audiovisual aids, but be careful about cost factors. The local CPS unit may have helpful materials already on hand, and the NCCAN Regional Resource Center can be helpful in locating and obtaining others.

- If publicized, the unfortunate occurrence of child maltreatment tragedies has a strong emotional impact on professional groups and organizations and on the community at large. Since such tragedies create public concern, they may provide an opportunity for increasing community awareness of how cooperation and coordination can help prevent further tragedies from occurring.

- Identify and use knowledgeable volunteers in the effort. Often an audience will respond more favorably to a concerned citizen who is seen as having no vested interest other than the interests of the child and the family.

Use of the Media

The media has frequently made use of the tragedies of child maltreatment, and many believe that media contact should be avoided because of what is seen as a tendency to "sensationalize" the problem. However, the media can also be a strong ally in the organization effort. A few hints on the use of the media might include:

- Invite the media to attend meetings where a presentation on child maltreatment is being made. If the presentation is a strong and positive one, the resulting story will probably be positive as well.

- A well-timed press release regarding the plan to organize a coordinating committee can be extremely helpful. One example of such a release follows this page as Exhibit III.

EXHIBIT III
SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

15c

'76 Gulfport Star Journal

Vol. 1 No. 9 | Gulfport, Mississippi | August 26, 1976

Keesler plans program to prevent child abuse

KEESLER AFB–The organization of a Gulf Coast council to help coordinate agencies working with child abuse and neglect was proposed at a seminar recently sponsored by the Keesler Child Advocacy Program (CAP).

Capt. James Jenkins, Keesler's child advocacy officer, made the proposal to 67 people representing various agencies that deal with child abuse at the luncheon seminar at the Keesler Officers Club.

The seminar was the first step to bring together Gulf Coast agencies providing services and response to child abuse and neglect.

Dr. Beulah Compton, a researcher in the field of child abuse from the University of Minnesota, was guest speaker. Her presentation stressed the necessity and importance of various agencies working together.

Compton discussed the role of several agencies that deal with child abuse and neglect. She also made suggestions on how to improve methods of dealing with abusive parents and child abuse cases.

"It is easier to change families than communities," Compton said. "The only way to help an abused child is to help the family."

Compton also said agencies should have a 24-hour call service in case some parent or family is in need. "Agencies working with abusive parents must build a trust to enable parents to become dependent upon them initially. This way parents can better use the services available," she said.

At the present time there is no formally organized coordination of agencies providing service to families experiencing abuse or neglect.

Alpha Delta chapter

The Alpha Delta chapter of Beta Sigma Phi met on Tuesday April 6, in the home of Mrs. Pat Morgan. Co-hostess was Phylis Butler.

Coming events discussed included the state convention in Columbus, June 4-6, the Founder's Day celebration at the Hilton Inn April 24, and the Rosebud ritual to be held from 2-4 p.m. on Sunday May 16, in the home of Mrs. Sammie Baxter.

City council officers were announced, and Mrs. Morgan, ways and means chairman, announced that $21.08 was earned at the March 27 bake sale at the K-Mart.

Guest speaker was Capt. James Jenkins from Keesler AFB, who showed a film on child abuse, and led a discussion on what can be done about the problem. Capt. Jenkins, who has a Ph.D. in social work from the University of Denver, pointed out that a large number of abusive parents were, as children, abused themselves. He emphasized the need for help and understanding for these parents.

- Work with reporters and newspersons in developing feature articles on stories which show the positive effects of multidisciplinary cooperation in working with an abused child and/or the parents of that child. A nearby community in which a coordinating committee exists may be of help in this regard, as is also true of a local chapter of Parents Anonymous or some of the service providers in the community.

In short, the coordinating committee should avail itself of every opportunity to "go public" in any way which supports the organizing effort without undermining any of the service providers whose participation will be needed.

GAINING COOPERATION AND PARTICIPATION FROM AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

As important as the public awareness activities are, they are less important than the activities associated with gaining the cooperation of the agencies and organizations who will be included in the coordinating effort. The activities involved in gaining this support can be divided into two types:

- informal activities designed to gain acceptance and tentative support from the agencies

- formal activities which will result in concrete commitments to participate in the committee.

Informal Activities to Gain Acceptance

A logical extension of the activities related to the community assessment discussed in Chapter II is the development of relationships with the key service providers in the community. As with the process of identifying core group members, this process requires persistence, understanding and sensitivity toward other persons.

If the CPS agency already has these relationships, the process can move immediately to formal activities. If the relationships are not secure, however, members of the core group should spend time getting to know all of the key agencies and organizations. They should be certain to understand what each sees as their primary mission, and become personally acquainted with the primary decision makers in those organizations.

The effort here should focus on listening and supporting. Every service delivery agency will have strengths which can aid in the coordinating effort and weaknesses which can be supplemented by the coordination.

One of the strategies which can be used to gain acceptance from the primary decision makers is seeking constructive ways in which the core group members can assist the agency or organization without asking for anything in return. Another is asking for their assistance or advice about a particular problem or case in their areas of expertise.

This process is often time consuming and frustrating. Agencies that seem resistant to the coordinating effort may believe that the committee is attempting to usurp their authority or tell them how to fulfill their responsibilities. Both of these perceptions will increase the resistance to cooperation.

Some key points to remember:

- Be visible and available without being a "nuisance."
- Make it clear that the concern of the committee is only to make every agency or organization even more effective than it has been.
- When an agency has a notable success, acknowledge it and seek ways of indicating to the decision makers that their success can help others in the community be more responsive to meeting the needs of children and families.
- Without "preaching," seek ways of demonstrating to the agency that a joint plan for filling service gaps may have a greater chance for success than if one or more groups try to "go it alone."
- As opportunity presents itself to discuss the coordinating committee, reinforce the concept that the committee will be an advisory body controlled by the members, not a controlling group which will dictate how others should function.

- Once an agency or organization indicates willingness to participate, inform them that a meeting will occur in the near future at which time those groups willing to participate will be asked to select one or more representative(s) to the committee.

Formal Activities to Obtain Commitments

In some communities there may be a readiness for the initiation of a committee. In these cases, it may be possible to simply obtain commitments from various agencies and organizations, schedule the first meeting, and notify the agencies of the date and place.

In most communities, however, agencies will hesitate to make a commitment until they see if others are willing to do the same. In these cases, the planning of a one-day workshop or seminar to present the concept is an essential step in obtaining commitments to participate.

Some key steps in planning the meeting will include:

- Schedule a meeting at least six weeks in advance.

- Obtain a facility of adequate size for the anticipated group, being certain that the heating, lighting, seating arrangements, and accessibility are appropriate.

- Identify and obtain the materials and audio-visuals you will need. A film such as NCCAN's "Working Together"* can be of great value, but be sure to preview it ahead of time to be certain that it fits with your presentation, and your community needs.

- Obtain the services of one or two outside speakers who can present and support the community committee concept. One should be a knowledgeable person currently participating on a community committee or team who can discuss the benefits which they have seen. The other might be a person from either the Regional Office of DHEW or the NCCAN Regional Resource Center who can indicate support of the concept and possibly offer technical assistance in forming the committee. (Note

*May be obtained through the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect, P.O. Box 1182, Washington, D.C. 20013, Order No. 000541.

that the psychology of having "outsiders" present the concept and offer assistance will serve to reduce any anxiety some may feel about CPS or some other group trying to control their programs.)

Issuing Invitations

Formal letters of invitation should be sent to both public and private organizations, and to concerned individuals in the community who may have any interest in the coordinating committee. This letter, a sample of which is included as Exhibit IV following this page, should be mailed not more than four weeks nor less than two weeks prior to the meeting.

In order to ensure the broadest possible representation, the invitees should include as many of the groups or individuals listed in Chapter I as possible. In addition, the invitees should represent:

- all of the major geographic subdivisions and populations to be served
- all possible socio-economic areas or groups in the community
- all interested political officials, including Senators, Congressmen, county and/or city officials and others as appropriate.

Particularly for those agencies which have expressed an interest in the coordination effort, a follow-up phone call approximately five to seven days prior to the meeting can confirm "how important we feel you are to this whole process" and can obtain a commitment to attend.

The Meeting Agenda

This meeting will have only one major purpose--to obtain commitments from as many agencies, organizations and key individuals as possible to participate in the coordinating committee. The agenda should be as short as possible, including only those elements essential for obtaining these commitments.

One example of such an agenda might be as follows:

- Introduction and Explanation of Meeting Purpose - 15 minutes

EXHIBIT IV
SAMPLE LETTER OF INVITATION

COORDINATING COMMITTEE
CHILD PROTECTION COUNCIL
HARRISON COUNTY

Dear:

Your agency has been identified among the network of agencies providing services to children in Harrison County. Child abuse and neglect are problems of growing concern in our community as we become more aware of the high incidence and the effect they have upon the lives of involved family members. There are a number of agencies providing services in response to this need. However, each agency tends to operate autonomously in the absence of any systematic approach to coordinating these services.

It has been proposed that a Child Protection Council be organized in Harrison County. The Council would be composed of representatives of agencies currently providing services to abusive and neglecting families. The purpose of the Child Protection Council could be to decrease the incidence of child maltreatment through prevention programs such as public awareness campaigns and parenting education and to increase the effectiveness of evaluation and treatment services through the clarification and coordination of the responsibilities and services or agencies.

Your agency is invited to participate in the development and implementation of the Child Protection Council. There will be a forum for participating agencies on April 12, 1977 at 3:00 pm at the Chamber of Commerce Building on Highway 90 in Gulfport. Mr. Jerry White, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Children's Bureau, Atlanta Office has provided consultation during the preliminary planning phase and will attend the meeting on the 12th.

A questionnaire designed to assess current child protection services and needs is enclosed. Your cooperation in completing the questionnaire and returning it to me at P. O. Box 7, Gulfport, not later than April 1st will enable us to tabulate and distribute the findings at the forum.

Your support and participation will be vital to the success of the Child Protection Council. If you find it impossible to attend, please send a representative from your agency.

Sincerely,

- Film: "Working Together" (NCCAN) - 45 minutes
- Guest Speaker - "How the Harrison County Committee Works" - 30 minutes
- Coffee Break - 15 minutes
- Guest Speaker - "How the NCCAN Resource Center Can Help Johnsville" - 20 minutes
- Focused Discussion - "Let's Get Together" - 30 minutes
- Questions and Answers - 20 minutes.

Near the close of the meeting, agencies and organizations present should be asked to designate one or two representatives to attend an organizational meeting for the committee. A form such as Exhibit V, following this page, can be used for this purpose.

If possible, the meeting should end with a statement as to when the first meeting of the new coordinating council will be held, where it will occur, and what the key agenda items will probably be.

Meeting Logistics

Good meetings do not happen by accident; they are the result of careful planning and preparation. The core group must ensure that specific persons are designated for the following functions:

- meeting and escorting outside speakers to the meeting room
- greeting and registering all attendees by name and agency or organization
- chairing or moderating the meeting and introducing speakers
- checking out the physical facilities before the meeting. A checklist such as that in Exhibit VI, following this page, can be used.

After the Meeting

Post-meeting letters should be sent to every individual and agency invited to the meeting. Persons who did attend should receive letters of appreciation (an example is included as Exhibit VII), and persons

EXHIBIT V
SAMPLE FORM FOR DESIGNATION OF REPRESENTATIVES

Please return this form to:

Coordinating Committee
P. O. Box 723
Johnsville, WE 20301

Being aware of the critical nature of child abuse and neglect and its far reaching effects on the community, I commit my agency to full participation and cooperation in the inter-agency effort to address this multifaceted problem.

In order to participate in the coordination of services among agencies, I designate _____ to represent my agency on the Harrison County Child Protection Council. This designee will serve for a period of one year and has my approval to attend regular meetings with the Coordinating Committee on agency time.

Name: _____

Title: _____

Agency: _____

Date: _____

EXHIBIT VI

MEETING SITE PREPARATION CHECKLIST

1. Check out rooms for:

   a. Lighting
   b. Air-conditioning
   c. Seating arrangements
   d. Equipment

2. Equipment:

   a. Is it operating properly?
   b. Are there extra bulbs for projectors?
   c. Can visuals be seen by group?
   d. Is equipment accessible to chairperson and coordinator?
   e. Have storage and safekeeping arrangements been made?

3. Seating:

   a. Enough chairs and tables?
   b. Supplies such as paper, pencils
   c. Name tags or table place cards
   d. Does room arrangement lend to discussion among participants?

4. Other facilities:

   a. Are participants aware of coat closets, wash room, coffee break area?
   b. Have you arranged for coffee break?
   c. Is there a phone nearby in case of emergency?
   d. Have you arranged to hold messages and calls for participants?
   e. Have arrangements been made for cleaning meeting rooms at appropriate time?

5. Paper Materials:

   a. Are all materials on hand?
   b. Are materials accessible for easy distribution?
   c. Are they in the order you will use them?

EXHIBIT VII
SAMPLE LETTER OF APPRECIATION

COORDINATING COMMITTEE
CHILD PROTECTION COUNCIL
HARRISON COUNTY

May 13, 1977

Ms. Patsy Holden, Director
Harrison County Welfare Dept.
P.O. Box 300
Johnsville, WE 20301

Dear Ms. Holden:

We appreciate your response to the Coordinating Committee of the Harrison County Child Protection Council. By designating Ella Jones and Donna Hays to work with the Council, the Welfare Department will have representation in planning the future activities of the Council.

The first meeting of agency designees will be at 3 p.m. on May 24th, 1977 at the Harrison County Chamber of Commerce. The purpose of the meeting will be to define areas of participation, goals, and priorities.

We will encourage designees to share with their administrators the progress of the council, and we welcome your participation at any time.

Sincerely,

Sandra J. Dixon
Coordinating Committee
CHILD PROTECTION COUNCIL
P.O. Box 723
Johnsville, WE 20301
PH #555-8764

cc: Ella Jones
Donna Hays

who did not attend should be advised as to what happened at the meeting, reassured that they were missed, and invited to attend or send a representative to the first meeting of the council.

IV

THE INITIAL MEETINGS OF THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE

After the core group has laid the groundwork and obtained commitments from members of the community's child protective services delivery system, it is time to hold the first formal meeting of the newly formed coordinating committee. The local CPS should take a major role in all phases of this process.

ACTIVITIES PRIOR TO THE FIRST MEETING

Prior to this first meeting, a letter should be sent to all members (both those who have made a commitment and those who have not yet responded). This letter should contain information on the date, time and location of the meeting along with a copy of the proposed agenda. Each member should be encouraged to attend but instructed that if for some reason they are unable to attend, they should send a representative.

SOME ORGANIZATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Chairperson and the Secretary

There should be a chairperson to run each meeting as well as to focus the members on the agenda for that meeting. In addition, one of the members should act as the committee's secretary to record the minutes of the meeting. For some committees, these positions could be filled on a rotating basis (for a term of not less than 6 months), thereby involving everyone on the committee and distributing the burden of the work. In other communities, a more long-term assignment of these functions may be needed to ensure continuity and encourage the continued work of the committees.

The chairperson for the first few meetings should probably be a member of the core group. After that, the next chairperson should probably be the CPS director (if that individual was not a member of the core group) and there should be group consensus on successors. It is important to make certain that the succeeding chairpersons come from a variety of disciplines and not just from one. For example, after the CPS director has served a term as chairperson, the next chairperson might be the head of the pediatric ward at a local hospital, the director of the welfare department, the superintendent of schools, or the chief of police. However, the first few chairpersons should

be individuals who have had some prior leadership experience. A list of some responsibilities which would be applicable to the chairperson includes:

- Maintaining relations within the committee
- Providing good information, technical assistance and training for members
- Maintaining contact with involved agencies
- Maintaining the flow of information to public and professional groups.*

The secretary should work closely with the chairperson to provide support in carrying out these responsibilities.

Organization of Subcommittees or Teams

An effective way to organize a coordinating committee is by using a team approach. Depending on committee size and make-up, committee members can be divided into functional teams or subcommittees such as research and program development, assessment, treatment, education and training, prevention and public awareness, public relations, and legal and legislative. Each subcommittee would have its own specific functions, and be made up of members from different disciplines and agencies. A chairperson should be selected for each team. With this sort of organizational structure, each team can be responsible for examining problems or needs in its own area and can set priorities within that area.

This basic organizational structure is flexible and adaptable. The exact structure and membership of the committee and its subcommittees will not be the same from one community to another. The number and types of subcommittees established will depend on the needs and resources of the community and on the interests and skills of the committee members.

THE FIRST MEETING

The core group should keep in mind that one of the most important functions of this first meeting is to establish a solid base for interagency communication, cooperation and respect. It is a prerequisite for establishing a coordinating committee that the initiators

*cf. Urzi, Mary, Cooperative Approaches to Child Protection: A Community Guide, Minnesota Department of Public Welfare; St. Paul.

be aware of gaps and problems in services delivered by the child abuse and neglect response system in the community; however, it is equally important that no one at the meeting, or on the council, be accusatory and that no one agency or group be singled out for criticism. In some instances, the first meeting or two may result in some "finger pointing" and/or "turf disputes."

A successful group leader can help diffuse such a potentially explosive situation by continually encouraging the group to focus on strengths as well as weaknesses. Where there is general agreement on weaknesses which exist in the system, the chairperson can demonstrate how these weaknesses can be viewed as starting points for planning and coordination. Accusations will only alienate the agency or group being criticized, and will hinder the development of cooperative relationships between agencies dealing with various aspects of the problem of child abuse and neglect.

The first meeting, as well as all subsequent meetings, should begin on time and have a specific structure or agenda and those involved should stick closely to that agenda. The following is a suggested agenda for the first meeting:

- Review the coordinating committee concept and discuss examples of other successful coordinating committees
- Introduce each member with brief descriptions of how they, their agency or group fits into the response system
- Discuss the existing child protection response system and gaps therein
- Identify gaps in representation and develop strategies to deal with these gaps
- Discuss general goals of the committee and identify one or two short range objectives
- Discuss a schedule for future meetings of the coordinating committee.

As mentioned earlier, one of the members of the core group should chair the first meeting. The primary purpose of this meeting is to establish lines of communication between the various agencies present. The chairperson should review the purpose of the committee, and describe

the existing child protection delivery system and the gaps in this system as the core group perceives them. Initially, there should be a review of the statistics on the incidence of child abuse and neglect reports in the community and a review of the community's response to the problem. Examples of other successful coordinating committees should be discussed. (In selecting these examples, the core group should talk about those committees which were set up in areas with similar geographic and demographic characteristics to their own area, i.e., if the core group's community is a rural one, they should discuss councils that have been set up in rural areas rather than those set up in large urban areas.)

The chairperson should be certain that all persons present are introduced. Gaps in membership should be identified, i.e., the council should have multidisciplinary representation and if certain disciplines are not represented, strategies should be developed to remedy this situation. The chairperson should then outline the tentative goals developed by the core group for the committee, open the meeting up for discussion of these goals, and focus on identifying one or two short-range objectives for the committee.

Finally, a decision should be reached on the best day and time for the monthly meetings of the coordinating committee. (It is probably best to start out having the meetings on a monthly basis as this allows members time in which to prepare for the following meeting.) Such options as morning, luncheon, afternoon or evening meetings can be discussed. If at all possible, it would be advisable to hold the meetings at the CPS facilities.

MAXIMIZING PARTICIPATION

It is desirable that as many people as possible attend the first meeting. However, if the turnout is not as complete as expected, the initiators should not be worried. It is more important to encourage those who do attend to remain with the council and to be active members. Verbal commitment is not enough; the council cannot succeed without an involved membership. After the first meeting (*and* after all subsequent meetings), the initiators should follow-up by keeping in touch with those who attended as well as with those who sent no representative. A letter should be sent to all members (including any who were absent). The names of those who attended and those who did not attend should be listed. Those who did not attend should be encouraged to attend the next meeting or to send a representative. Those who attended should be thanked for their participation. The letter should contain a brief summary of points covered during the meeting and give the date, time, location and agenda of the next meeting.

THE SECOND AND THIRD MEETINGS

At the second meeting, the agenda might include the following:

- Presentation and discussion of existing state laws and any that are pending
- Members could provide copies of their agency's current policy on child abuse and neglect
- Members could examine these various policies and check whether they are in compliance with state law.

Functions and objectives of the committee should be discussed, with focus on specific issues such as community needs assessment, education and training, prevention and public awareness, and so forth. The goals should be categorized, and in larger communities, relevant subcommittees formed. Volunteers can be solicited for addressing the various issues or serving on subcommittees or teams. Care should be taken that any subcommittees formed have multidisciplinary representation. Naturally, the size, composition and number of subcommittees will vary considerably depending on community resources and the size of the coordinating committee itself.

At the third meeting, the focus could be on the subcommittees or issues. In each instance, it will be necessary to

- Identify the major areas of concern
- Discuss the objectives related to each issue
- Discuss tentative plans for meeting these objectives
- Assign responsibility for completing and/or carrying out elements of the plans.

DEVELOPING ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY

Early in the organization process, the committee should focus on answering two key questions which will impact their future effectiveness. These are:

- Who are you? Does your committee have a name?
- Who do you represent?

Who Are You?

While it may seem trivial or unnecessary, it is generally useful for the committee to establish a specific identity for itself. The committee must be seen as connected to existing service providers, particularly CPS, but not subsumed by them. The committee is intended to be a multidisciplinary body which includes representatives from every agency and organization involved in the community's child protection system.

The committee is unique in that it has no single jurisdiction. For this reason, it can be effective in helping agencies and community organizations coordinate their services, but this can also lead to problems with keeping the council autonomous and not allowing it to be coopted by any dominant agency. The committee can have its independence assured by developing a charter, by incorporating or by seeking United Way (or similar organization) membership. Thus, the committee would have its own funding and would be in a position to develop its own response.

Among the questions addressed at the early meetings should be the issue of what type of name would be both most effective in conveying the purposes of the group and most acceptable to the key agencies and organizations in the community. It is also true that the name selected will have a bearing on whether or not the group will receive support from the political bodies in the community at that point in time when such support becomes important.

Names such as "Pinehurst Area Coordinating Committee for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect" are long and difficult to remember, but do convey important elements of the description of purpose. "The Child Protection Council of Alexandria County," and "The Bartholomew County Child Protection Coordinating Committee" are examples of other types of names which might be used. In some communities, the terms "council" or "committee" may have some negative connotations which should be avoided and the committee may choose to identify itself as a "task force." The term "group" has an informal connotation which might be better avoided at this point, but if it serves the purposes of identity for a specific community (e.g. "The Arundel Family Services Coordinating Group"), it might be used.

Who Do You Represent?

As a multidisciplinary, multiagency body, the committee must be viewed as supportive of the efforts of all service providers in the community. In many areas it will be valuable for the committee to be sponsored by or affiliated with a well established community group.

Whenever possible, identification of the committee as being a support group for the local CPS unit may be a desirable alternative in describing with whom the group is affiliated. In other areas, some other affiliation may be desirable (e.g., affiliations with a local ministerial body, united fund organization, or professional organization such as the National Association of Social Workers) as the "umbrella" under which the core group chooses to take its initial stand. Again, this decision should be made in one of the early meetings, and an official recognition of the committee by such a group should be obtained. Any group selected as the "sponsoring organization" or "umbrella" should be one which is recognized as having legitimate cause for concern about and involvement in the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect in the community.

In any event, the committee should still receive support from the community power structure and some financial support also. These ties with the community will lend visibility and legitimacy to the coordinating committee.

PLANNING COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Once the role of the committee has been defined--in terms of the development of agency coordination and provision of child protective services--and a determination has been made concerning the level of functioning of the child protection system, the committee can begin to plan and organize its entry into the response system of the community.

Everyone in the community's child protection system who will be affected by the committee's activities must be involved in the decision-making process when those activities are being planned. In order to promote interaction and avoid the resistance or loss of support of individual service providers, committee activities must be coordinated according to cues from existing community agencies. The committee should avoid doing anything before the representatives have been informed and given a chance to voice their opinions, or delaying until long after the representatives think the activity should have been completed.

BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

The coordinating committee will undoubtedly encounter some difficulties in getting started. Among the most common problems encountered are:

- Getting "bogged down" in theoretical issues
- Power struggles between member groups
- Confidentiality questions
- Long-term issues such as leadership or turnover.

Theoretical Issues

There are problems occasionally with committees getting bogged down in theoretical issues or in failing to establish clear committee goals. Some professionals in the community may associate child protection work with "welfare" and may be unwilling to participate or may even fail to acknowledge the existence of the problem in their community; extensive educational efforts can help to counter these problems.

Power Struggles

Some agencies may have had experiences in dealing with other agencies which have resulted in bad feelings between representatives of different agencies. Because of these experiences, or perhaps for other reasons, power struggles may develop in some committees. With this type of difficulty, the only solution is to return to shared concerns and shared goals. Professional philosophies may at times come into conflict, with each group feeling its own areas of expertise is most important, and professional language barriers may compound this problem. Committee members must commit themselves once again to working together to overcome this and be reminded that the committee is designed to provide support to the local CPS.

Confidentiality

The issue of confidentiality may get in the way of interagency sharing of information. This must be discussed and procedures must be developed to deal with this problem. From time to time, everyone must be reminded that the primary purpose of the entire effort is to help the child who is the victim of child abuse and neglect.

Long-Term Issues

Other barriers to the success of the community committee may develop over the longer term. One such problem may arise when the leadership of the council or of a subcommittee must be transferred. Foresight

requires that all council members develop some leadership skills from the beginning so that if one individual leaves, the team and the council can still function effectively. A related problem is turnover of members. A small amount of turnover is tolerable, but extensive turnover may impair the effectiveness of the team or the council. Members of the coordinating committee should, therefore, look upon their participation as a long-term, rather than short-term commitment.

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FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

To the extent that the organizing effort is planned and carried out in an effective manner, the process of organization can generate a great deal of enthusiasm in members. Once the organization is completed, however, the danger exists that the coordinating committee will become "just another group," with little effective achievement occurring after the initial organization. For this reason, there are two categories of committee functioning which will require continuous attention to ensure effectiveness. These are:

- External functions essential to the coordination of the community's overall efforts in preventing and treating child abuse and neglect
- Internal functions essential to maintaining the viability and credibility of the committee as a functioning organization.

EXTERNAL FUNCTIONS

As identified in Chapter I of this manual, the external functions of the committee can be divided into eight specific areas. These are:

- Encouraging policies of cooperation and support
- Surveying and analyzing needs and resources
- Developing community awareness of needs and resources
- Making program recommendations
- Developing new community resources and programs as needed
- Providing service evaluation
- Facilitating multidisciplinary case consultation teams
- Serving as advocates for children and families.

Each of these functions are discussed briefly in the paragraphs which follow.

Encouraging Policies of Cooperation

To fulfill this function, the committee must undertake several types of activity. For one thing, it must develop as broad a membership as possible. A broad membership and a continual effort to recruit new members will ensure that the committee has access to as many community agencies and groups as possible. The committee must take responsibility for encouraging every group involved in providing services to abusing or neglectful families to establish policies regarding interagency cooperation.

Surveying and Analyzing Needs and Resources

As stated previously, the core group should conduct a needs assessment in order to determine preliminary objectives and priorities that might be addressed by the community coordinating committee.

Since needs assessment should be an ongoing process, this function should continue to be a committee concern on an on-going basis. In general, the committee or an appropriate subcommittee would follow the same general procedures as the core group. The foci of the needs and resources assessment are

- updating the previous analysis
- developing a more detailed programmatic analysis
- completing or updating the resource inventory
- analyzing particular needs of service providers for program enhancement.

As the committee develops or encourages additional programs, the impact of these programs should be addressed in terms of additional needs. Community awareness efforts and program recommendations will then flow naturally from this on-going analysis.

Developing Community Awareness of Needs and Resources

This function is also a continuation and update of work performed by the core group during the organizational process (see Chapter III). A successful committee will see the results of its efforts manifested

through an increase in services and coordination and through increased community support for prevention and treatment efforts. Since so much of public awareness of child maltreatment revolves around tragedies and problems, the community coordinating committee should take every possible opportunity to direct attention toward success.

Among the types of situations toward which the committee can direct community attention are:

- The development of a new community program or resource to assist families in stress
- Successful self-help programs (e.g. Parents Anonymous)
- Successful volunteer efforts (e.g. a Parent Aide program or an individual volunteer's success story)
- The success story of a particular family (if communicated with care and compassion and with the cooperation and permission of the family involved).

Making Program Recommendations

Making program recommendations is one of the primary functions of a community coordinating committee. If the committee is viewed by professional groups and organizations and by the community at large as a legitimate body, it will be able to exert a strong influence on the development of local child abuse and neglect programs.

Assuming an accurate and functional needs assessment has been conducted, the committee can develop strategies for attacking specific problems. In some communities a subcommittee with multidisciplinary membership might be appointed to develop program recommendations. The following steps are one suggested approach to drafting alternative programs:

- Review the needs and resources analysis.
- Prioritize the identified problems in terms of how many children or families are effected and to what extent.
- Identify needs in terms of long-range, intermediate and/or immediate strategies for action.
- Realistically assess what services can be obtained or used to alleviate the problem.

-- can an existing resource be enlarged, modified or redirected?

-- should one or more new services be initiated in the community?

- Develop a preliminary program recommendation.

- Determine a specific program recommendation and initiate action for implementation.*

Developing New Community Resources and Programs as Needed

In most communities, CPS and other agencies will readily identify many of the treatment and referral services needed by the community in preventing or alleviating the recurrence of child maltreatment. The NCCAN Regional Resource Centers can provide the committee with information as to where successful programs exist and how these services can be implemented.

A major focus of committee efforts in program development will revolve around primary and secondary prevention programs.

Primary Prevention

Primary prevention is effort designed to make society more supportive to effective child rearing and applies to all adults who care for children. Many primary prevention programs are educational in nature. They can include training in parental bonding, pre- and post-natal care, child rearing, child development, household and financial management, problem solving and coping with stress, community resources, nutrition, family planning, and discipline. These programs should be designed to reach adolescents currently in school, individuals who are already parents, and anyone who might be considering parenthood.

Programs which help children to develop the skills they will need in order to function effectively as adults also fall into the category of primary prevention. Programs in child care centers or schools which have the potential to aid the child's psychological, intellectual and physical growth are examples of this.

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*cf. *Child Abuse and Neglect . . . An Interdisciplinary Approach to Treatment and Prevention.* Missouri State Department of Social Services, Division of Family Services, n.d.

Advocacy is another important form of primary prevention. This includes advocacy for changes in the role of children in society, for support of the family structure, and for alleviation of basic social problems related to unemployment, poor housing, poverty, or discrimination.

In most committees, members who are professional educators can be teamed with CPS in assuming leadership functions in primary prevention. In larger committees, a subcommittee can be formed to address prevention issues, either in terms of primary prevention alone or combining primary and secondary prevention.

Secondary Prevention

The community coordinating committee should also provide for secondary prevention programs. Members representing agencies responsible for identifying families which are at risk or in crisis and are likely to become abusive or neglectful should take the lead, since secondary prevention programs should be geared to prevent child abuse and/or neglect in these families. These programs could include the following:

- A crisis telephone line or hot line which is operated 24 hours per day, seven days per week. This provides for someone to listen in times of stress and for referral to other community services as appropriate

- A crisis center to receive and care for children when parents are in crisis

- A homemaker service to place someone in the home if parents need relief from household responsibilities

- A parent-aide program in which trained volunteers provide support to families and relieve stress during crises

- Foster grandparent, big brother or big sister programs to provide individual attention and positive adult role models for children at risk

- Parents Anonymous groups which parents can contact if they feel they have the potential for abuse or neglect

- Visiting health nurses who can meet with families at risk on a regular basis to provide help with child care and to ensure early identification of medical or child care problems

- Parents' Day Out programs to care for children so that parents can have time to be by themselves and to be relieved of child care responsibilities

Providing Service Evaluation

One of the primary functions of the coordinating committee is to conduct an ongoing evaluation of community services. Working with appropriate service providing agencies, the committee or a designated subcommittee should gather service evaluation data. Data collected from service providers should include information on the number of cases served and the kinds of services provided. In addition, performance standards should be developed in order to measure actual performance and assist service providers in upgrading services as needed.

This type of evaluation will ensure that services are delivered with maximum efficiency and without duplication. Where inadequacies in service delivery are revealed, they should be analyzed and the subcommittee should provide recommendations for improvement.

Rather than evaluating services themselves, the committee might choose to assist service providers in evaluating their own services. Again, a subcommittee might be appointed but, in this case, their function should be providing technical assistance to service providers. The basic steps already mentioned could still be used. Again, performance standards should be established, either by the subcommittee or by the agencies themselves, so that service providers can determine whether they are meeting accepted standards. If they do not, the committee or subcommittee should assist the service providers in developing alternative methods for correcting defects.

Facilitating Child Abuse and Neglect Case Consultation Teams

The community coordinating committee in cooperation with the local CPS agency should encourage and facilitate the development and functioning of multidisciplinary child abuse and neglect case consultation teams in the community. These case consultation

teams are designed to provide technical assistance in case assessment and planning, to coordinate the effective delivery of services to abusive and neglectful families, and to provide support and assistance to professionals in working with specific families.

Case consultation teams can prove valuable both in the community or in geographical subdivisions of the community and in specific facilities such as hospitals, clinics and residential care centers. The committee or a designated multidisciplinary subcommittee can assist the development of these teams in several ways depending on the community. These include:

- Appointment of specific members of the committee to serve on a community team or a geographical subdivision team
- Identification and recruitment of members of various professions or disciplines as participants on teams
- Provision of technical assistance to special facilities in organizing and operating an effective team
- Identification of special consultants who can assist teams in working through various organizational or case-related problems

The following steps are suggested as one approach to organizing and facilitating the development of case consultation teams:

- agree on purpose, goals and objectives
- appoint members
- select leader
- define the roles and responsibilities of members
- establish general guidelines and procedures for case discussion

- determine meeting schedules and identify procedures for calling emergency meetings

Case consultation may occur on an "as needed" basis or on every case, depending on the resources and needs of individual communities and on the organization of the community committee. Where case consultation teams are made up of persons who are not on the community committee, a liaison person should be selected to help coordinate the efforts of the case consulation team with the committee

Serving as Advocates for Children and Families

The advocacy role of the coordinating committee was cited briefly in the previous discussion on primary prevention programs. In addition to serving as advocates for social change which will benefit families, the committee can also perform three other types of advocacy functions. These are:

- Advocacy in negotiations between various service providers related to which agency or organization will assume responsibility for certain types of programs. This function is particularly important when the coordinating committee is instrumental in obtaining a new program or service for the community.

- Advocacy on behalf of professionals who perform essential actions in relation to reporting, treatment or other aspects of child maltreatment intervention when those professionals seem to be encountering problems with their agency or supervisor as a result of that action. For example, the committee may write a letter to a hospital commending the actions of a nurse who reports a suspected case of child abuse if a physician has refused to make such a report for what appear to be personal rather than professional reasons.

- Advocacy with legislators and elected officials for support of programs and services which are vital to the community's child protection system.

If performed with sensitivity, tact and diplomacy, all of these advocacy functions can be effective means of enhancing the community's response to the problems of abusive and neglectful families.

INTERNAL FUNCTIONS

Important to the continued effectiveness and viability of the committee is the performance of a number of internal functions. Concerns for the committee-related needs of members will include sensitivity to a variety of points of view. The committee must devote specific attention to meeting its own internal organizational needs in order to ensure the communication and cooperation necessary for fulfilling its external functions.

Among the internal functions of the committee are:

- Maintaining open communications
- Developing cooperative work planning procedures
- Initiating procedures for feedback, internal evaluation and change
- Maintaining organizational accountability.

Each of the functions are discussed briefly in the paragraphs which follow.

Maintaining Open Communications

Interagency communication is crucial if service delivery is to be properly coordinated. For this reason, the committee must maintain present members and recruit new ones. Lines of communication must be open so that information on successful as well as unsuccessful service plans may be transmitted along with information on gaps or duplications in community services. "Turfism" or feelings of territoriality among professionals involved in the child protection system must be prevented; open communications and an understanding of mutual goals among community agencies and professional groups should decrease these attitudes in the community.

Maintenance of committee membership should not be difficult as long as the committee is organized so that all members have a chance to express their opinions and are convinced that the opinions are considered valuable contributions. In addition, recruitment of new members should be one of the committee's top priorities. The committee should make every effort to involve key agencies and professional groups which are not already represented. This can be done partially through informal discussions with members of the group. In addition, it is a good idea to notify the group or agency if the committee is acting on something that might affect them. If council

members can obtain suggestions from the group regarding that particular change, there is a good possibility that the group or agency will become involved in other committee activities as well.

In addition, it is very important to recruit members from the business community. These members will have a very different perspective on committee activities and at the same time, may be willing to help with publicity activities or provision of resources as a public service.

Developing Cooperative Work Planning Procedures

The committee must perform some general types of work planning functions before they can determine their priorities regarding service provision. These functions will help to ensure that the committee is active and not just a discussion group. Work planning by the committee should include the following steps.

- Achieve a sense of purpose and direction

  Achieving a sense of purpose or an understanding of the goals of the committee should be one of its first activities. It is important to remember that every member of the committee is concerned about the same problem but not from the same perspective. In order for the committee to accomplish anything, there must be a discussion of goals and perhaps a list of priorities developed. The council may want to distinguish long-term goals from short-term goals, as well. The overall goals of the committee should be decided at the outset so that a unified sense of purpose or direction is developed. This will ensure that all the members are working to achieve the same purpose at the same time.

- Maintain a focus on desired objectives

  This step is related to the last one because, in order for the committee to achieve its goals, objectives must be determined. Because the committee may be working on several different projects at a time (depending on its size), it should arrive at a consensus on specific projects that should be divided among the various functional teams or subcommittees.

- Develop flexible plans

  Although it has been recommended that there be a focus on specific objectives, it is necessary to retain some flexibility. Then, if something should interfere with initiation of one of the projects designated as top priority, a change in plans could be made with a minimum amount of disorganization. The committee should also be flexible enough to adopt new strategies for reaching an objective if they seem preferable to those currently in use. In addition, there should be flexibility within the organizational structure to allow for changes in membership on subcommittees should these exist.

- Employ communication and negotiation to achieve change

  There are bound to be disagreements among committee members regarding plans and procedures. Since members are working toward the same end, differences of opinion should be honestly discussed and compromises reached through negotiation. Allowing for active participation in decision-making results in increased cooperation among committee members.

- Make rational and feasible decisions

  Initially, committee members are very enthusiastic and may be likely to set unrealistic goals. Objectives with good possibilities for success should be undertaken at the outset. This minimizes the likelihood of failure, and prevents the loss of members because they are discouraged or disillusioned.

Initiating Procedures for Feedback, Evaluation and Change

It is essential for the maintenance of a successful committee to develop a system that allows for feedback. Such feedback is useful in assessing the overall effectiveness of the committee, as well as success or failure in meeting specific goals and objectives, and in determining future strategies. One way to obtain feedback is through the distribution of relatively simple questionnaires to committee members. The questionnaire would focus on the members' perceptions of the committee's activities, that is its good points and its deficiencies. This evaluation system would enable the committee to make the necessary changes if strategies prove ineffective.

Maintaining Organizational Accountability

The coordinating committee must be accountable to the community at large and to its member organizations and agencies. If this accountability is not taken seriously, the effectiveness of the committee will be seriously impaired. In a sense, the committee can only be effective as long as the community and the members perceive it as valuable to their efforts in combating the causes and conditions of child maltreatment.

Accountability to the Community

The committee should work to develop its own legitimacy and to establish a working relationship with the community power structure. If the committee is seen as a legitimate and influential body in the community, it will be better able to encourage policy development among the other agencies in the community because it will be seen as having some local impact. In the same respect, the more public visibility the committee can develop, the more credibility its recommendations will have.

The organizational accountability of the committee will also impact on its relationship with other community agencies. The committee could begin to develop organizational autonomy and independent resources by such methods as developing a charter, establishing itself as a non-profit organization, or by seeking United Way membership.

Accountability to Member Agencies and Organizations

Members of the committee must assume individual responsibility for maintaining accountability to and cooperation with their own agency or organization. This is true because each member represents a different professional or community group and a different perspective, and thus members would be most effective as advocates for policy development within their own disciplines.

Committee members will be responsible for communicating the purposes of the committee and information about other community service providers to those within their own professional group. They should also urge their group to join in the multidisciplinary efforts of the community by formally adopting a policy of cooperation with the committee. In this way, police officers on the committee should accept responsibility for encouraging cooperation among law enforcement professionals, educators should encourage cooperative policies on the part of the school system, and so on.

Representatives to the committee should also make their agencies' policies regarding child abuse and neglect known to others involved in the service delivery system so that suggestions for additions and improvements can be made. This multidisciplinary examination of agency policies can add new perspectives that have not been considered before.

APPENDIX A

REGIONAL CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT RESOURCE CENTERS

REGIONAL CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT RESOURCE CENTERS

Region I Child Abuse and Neglect
Resource Center
Judge Baker Guidance Center
295 Longwood Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts 02115

617-232-8390
(CT, ME, MA, RI, VT, NH)

Region II Child Abuse and Neglect
Resource Center
College of Human Ecology
Cornell University
MVR Hall
Ithaca, New York 14853

607-256-7794
(NJ, NY, PR, VI)

Region III Child Abuse and Neglect
Resource Center
Howard University Institute for
Urban Affairs and Research
2935 Upton Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008

202-686-6770
(DC, DE, MD, PA, VA, WV)

Region IV Child Abuse and Neglect
Resource Center
Regional Institute for Social
Welfare Research
P. O. Box 152
Athens, Georgia 30601

404-542-7614
(AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN)

REGIONAL CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT RESOURCE CENTERS (Cont'd)

Region V Child Abuse and Neglect
Resource Center
Graduate School of Social Work
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201

414-963-4184
(IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI)

Region VI Child Abuse and Neglect
Resource Center
Graduate School of Social Work
University of Texas at Austin
Austin, Texas 78712

512-471-4067
(AR, LA, NM, OK, TX)

Region VII Child Abuse and Neglect
Resource Center
Institute of Child Behavior and
Development
University of Iowa, Oakdale Campus
Oakdale, Iowa 52319

319-353-4825
(IA, KS, MO, NE)

Region VIII Child Abuse and Neglect
Resource Center
National Center for the Prevention
and Treatment of Child Abuse and
Neglect
1205 Oneida Street
Denver, Colorado 80220

303-321-3963
(CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY)

REGIONAL CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT RESOURCE CENTERS (Cont'd)

Region IX Child Abuse and Neglect
Resource Center
Department of Special Education
California State University
5151 State University Drive
Los Angeles, California 90032

213-224-3283
(AZ, CA, HI, NV, Guam, Trust Terr.)

Region X Child Abuse and Neglect
Resource Center
Western Federation for Human Service
157 Yesler Way, #208
Seattle, Washington 98104

206-624-5480
(AK, ID, OR, WA)

APPENDIX B

STANDARDS APPLICABLE TO MANUAL ON COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION FOR CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

STANDARDS APPLICABLE TO MANUAL ON COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION FOR CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

STANDARD C-7

PROGRAM MANAGERS AND PERSONNEL SHOULD COMMUNICATE CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT RESEARCH AND EVALUATION RESULTS TO APPROPRIATE POLICY MAKERS, PROGRAM DIRECTORS, AND OTHER INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS

STANDARD D-1

TO COORDINATE, ASSIST, AND STRENGTHEN THE STATE'S CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT PREVENTION, TREATMENT, AND RESOURCE ENHANCEMENT EFFORTS, THE HEAD OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT, AS DESIGNATED BY STATE LAW, SHOULD CONVENE A STATE CHILD PROTECTION COORDINATING COMMITTEE

STANDARD D-2

THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES (STATE DEPARTMENT) SHOULD ESTABLISH STATE-WIDE CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT POLICIES THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH STATE LAW AND CONDUCIVE TO THE DELIVERY OF UNIFORM AND COORDINATED SERVICES

STANDARD D-6

THE STATE DIVISION AND THE STATE COMMITTEE SHOULD WORK TOGETHER TO PREVENT AND TREAT CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT THROUGH THE JOINT DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE AND COORDINATED PLAN FOR THE DELIVERY OF CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

STANDARD D-13

TO GAIN KNOWLEDGE ON THE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT, THE STATE DIVISION SHOULD CONDUCT AND/OR SPONSOR RESEARCH EVALUATION, AND DEMONSTRATION EFFORTS

STANDARD D-14

TO FACILITATE THE IDENTIFICATION AND REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT, THE STATE DIVISION SHOULD DEVELOP AND PROVIDE PUBLIC AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

STANDARD E-5

TO FOSTER COOPERATIVE, COMMUNITY-WIDE CHILD PROTECTION EFFORTS, THE LOCAL AGENCY SHOULD INITIATE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMUNITY CHILD PROTECTION COORDINATING COUNCIL (COMMUNITY COUNCIL)

STANDARD E-6

THE LOCAL UNIT AND THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL SHOULD DEVELOP JOINTLY AN ANNUAL COMPREHENSIVE AND COORDINATED PLAN FOR THE DELIVERY OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT PREVENTION AND TREATMENT SERVICES

STANDARD E-7

THE LOCAL UNIT AND THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL SHOULD DEVELOP OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT TO SERVE AS THE BASIS FOR LOCAL INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

STANDARD E-8

THE LOCAL UNIT AND THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL SHOULD ESTABLISH A MULTIDISCIPLINARY CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT CASE CONSULTATION TEAM(S)

STANDARD E-15

THE LOCAL AGENCY AND THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL SHOULD ENSURE THAT TRAINING IS PROVIDED TO LOCAL UNIT STAFF AND OTHER COMMUNITY SERVICE SYSTEMS PERSONNEL

STANDARD E-16

TO ENCOURAGE THE IDENTIFICATION AND REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT, THE LOCAL AGENCY AND THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL SHOULD IMPLEMENT COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND AWARENESS COMPAIGNS

STANDARD E-17

TO GAIN KNOWLEDGE ON THE COMMUNITY'S EFFECTIVENESS IN CHILD PROTECTION, THE LOCAL AGENCY AND THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN OR INITIATE ITS OWN RESEARCH AND EVALUATION EFFORTS

STANDARD F-2

THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SHOULD PARTICIPATE ON THE STATE CHILD PROTECTION COORDINATING COMMITTEE, AND LOCAL HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS SHOULD PARTICIPATE ON THE COMMUNITY CHILD PROTECTION COORDINATING COUNCIL

STANDARD F-9

HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS SHOULD COOPERATE WITH OTHER COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS IN DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING TREATMENT PROGRAMS FOR ABUSED AND NEGLECTED CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

STANDARD F-11

HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS SHOULD COOPERATE WITH OTHER COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS IN DEVELOPING AND DISSEMINATING PUBLIC AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION MATERIALS ON CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

STANDARD G-3

THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH SHOULD PARTICIPATE ON THE STATE CHILD PROTECTION COORDINATING COMMITTEE, AND LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH PRACTITIONERS SHOULD PARTICIPATE ON THE COMMUNITY CHILD PROTECTION COORDINATING COUNCIL

STANDARD G-12

MENTAL HEALTH PRACTITIONERS AND FACILITIES SHOULD COOPERATE WITH OTHER COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND SYSTEMS INVOLVED WITH CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT, AND SHOULD PARTICIPATE ON MULTI-DISCIPLINARY TEAMS

STANDARD H-3

THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SHOULD PARTICIPATE ON THE STATE CHILD PROTECTION COORDINATING COMMITTEE, AND THE LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY SHOULD PARTICIPATE ON THE COMMUNITY CHILD PROTECTION COORDINATING COUNCIL

STANDARD H-12

THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY, IN COOPERATION WITH THE STATE CHILD PROTECTION COORDINATING COMMITTEE AND THE COMMUNITY CHILD PROTECTION COORDINATING COUNCIL, SHOULD DEVELOP, IMPLEMENT, AND SUPPORT PUBLIC AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS ON CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

STANDARD I-8

JUDICIAL SYSTEM PERSONNEL SHOULD PARTICIPATE ON THE STATE CHILD PROTECTION COORDINATING COMMITTEE AND ON THE COMMUNITY CHILD PROTECTION COORDINATING COUNCIL

STANDARD J-1

THE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY SHOULD DEVELOP POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND ORGANIZATIONAL MODELS THAT FACILITATE DECISION MAKING IN CASES OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

STANDARD J-2

THE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY SHOULD PARTICIPATE ON THE STATE CHILD PROTECTION COORDINATING COMMITTEE AND ON THE COMMUNITY CHILD PROTECTION COORDINATING COUNCIL

STANDARD J-9

THE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY SHOULD ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF IMPROVED AND INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO PREVENTING, IDENTIFYING, AND TREATING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

STANDARD K-I-6

THE INDEPENDENT STATE AGENCY SHOULD REQUEST THAT THE LOCAL COMMUNITY CHILD PROTECTION COORDINATING COUNCIL ASSIST IN ANY NEGOTIATIONS ON CORRECTIVE ACTION THAT REQUIRE CONCILIATION

STANDARD K-I-7

THE INDEPENDENT STATE AGENCY SHOULD WORK WITH THE STATE AND COMMUNITY TO DEVELOP ALTERNATIVES TO INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF CHILDREN

STANDARD K-II-3

EACH INSTITUTION SHOULD ESTABLISH A HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE TO IMPLEMENT CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING PROCEDURES

STANDARD K-II-4

INSTITUTIONAL STAFF SHOULD PARTICIPATE ON THE STATE CHILD PROTECTION COORDINATING COMMITTEE AND ON THE COMMUNITY CHILD PROTECTION COORDINATING COUNCIL

STANDARD K-II-13

EACH INSTITUTION SHOULD ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN COMMUNICATION WITH THE STATE AND THE COMMUNITY TO PROMOTE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF INSTITUTIONAL CARE AND TO DEVELOP ALTERNATIVES TO INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF CHILDREN

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